

Parade

SUNDAY, MAY 21, 2023 | PARADE.COM

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INSPIRED BY
**LAUREL
AND HARDY,**
AUDITIONING WITH
**HARRISON
FORD**
AND GOING A
LITTLE BONKERS
IN A RAUCOUS
NEW COMEDY

MARK

HAMILL

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to be remembered
for anything"*

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WALTER SCOTT'S Personality Parade

WALTER SCOTT ASKS...

A FOND FAREWELL TO NCIS: LOS ANGELES

After 14 seasons, *NCIS: Los Angeles* is coming to an end with its final episode airing May 21 on CBS. *Parade* was at the wrap party for the series, and had the opportunity to speak about the show's hopeful ending with the four main cast members: **Chris O'Donnell**, 52; **LL Cool J**, 55, who plays Sam Hanna; **Daniela Ruah**, 39, who plays Kensi Blye; and **Eric Christian Olsen**, 45, who plays Marty Deeks. Go to Parade.com/ncis-los-angeles-wedding for more on the season finale.

What has being on the show meant to you?

Chris O'Donnell: It was an amazing gift. It's a tough business that we're in. I've been very fortunate to have a lot of success. Typically, it's taken me all over the world and it's a little bit of a gypsy lifestyle. To have a show that filmed in Los Angeles that went for 14 years is so beyond my wildest dreams because it allowed all five of my kids to be in the same school and not miss out on what their friends are doing. I got to be home, even though I was working really long hours, to either see them in the morning or at night, one of the two. It was just the best.

From a professional standpoint, we're actors, we want to act. You don't get to do it a lot. You're hunting for jobs and then you do your job and that's kind of it. It's different than if you're a theater actor and you're on stage every night and constantly doing shows. We got to film, I don't know, 2,500 days. We were just cranking out pages. You learn a lot about your abilities. Forget the 10,000 to make yourself an expert; we got 20,000 or 30,000 hours.

LL Cool J: It's grown me as a human being. I learned more humility. It made me appreciate people more. I understand people from all walks of life a lot better



now. Because before this, even though I did some TV and film, I had a pretty insulated life in terms of being in the music game mostly. So, I was primarily around music people, which is kind of homogenous. [With this] I'm meeting people from all over the country, all different ethnicities, religions. It teaches you that human beings are all the same deep down in their hearts. A lot of the things that they want, a lot of their desires, hopes and dreams, beneath the surface there's a lot of similarities. So, you feel that love. You learn a different type of respect for everything.

Daniela Ruah: It has made me grow into a woman and into a mother with a husband and two children. The show put me on the map in terms of this business. This is my first major job. Somehow, I was lucky enough that it lasted this long. It has really given me an opportunity to try different things and see what works and see what doesn't work in terms of performance, in terms of exploring a character; in terms of all those things.

If you're in a movie, every scene is so incredibly important because you only get to see 50 scenes in a movie. But when you're in a show with over 300 ep-

isodes, you get to try stuff. Especially once your character's become established and the audience loves that character, you can now step out of line of that character a little bit. So, I learned to take a few risks and try some things and if it doesn't work it's okay, I have another episode to go back to.

"It's nice to go out when you feel like you're still hitting your stride, on a high note. I think it just worked out just right."

—Chris O'Donnell

This has made me grow all around as a person, an actor, a professional. And, of course, I started directing on the show, so that was a whole new skill level that was introduced.

Eric Christian Olsen: There are so many parts of this. We're talking about 14 years. It's high school, college, PhD, residency in one show. I don't even know how to fully articulate it because life is so different and the opportunities that came from this, not only as an actor but writing an episode,

continued on page 4



Callen (O'Donnell) will finally tie the knot with longtime girlfriend Anna (Paly) on the *NCIS* finale.

shadowing people that I love and learning how to do everything and now producing on the side—which has become more of a full-time job—none of those things would be possible without the support of our writers and our producers and CBS. I can't say enough about how remarkable this experience has been.

Will fans be happy with how this ends?

O'Donnell: I think they'll be very pleased. I think that they're in for a few surprises. I think they'll be touched. And I think that Callen's definitely at peace. It was a combination of not just the finale but the episode before that really focused on wrapping up a lot of his storyline. It was satisfying for me as an actor because you want to come full circle with everything. Have some closure.

Cool J: I think people will enjoy it.

Ruah: Oh, yeah. I think the audience is going to be really happy. It'll be wrapped up in a very nice little bow.

Olsen: I do, because this is not plot driven as much as it's emotionally driven, and so that's an easier arc to end because you've played so much out as far as where these characters are going and what they're searching for. The emotional button, I think, is easier to find than a plot-driven show where you have to have some giant reveal and some massive thing happens. I think between Callen and Sam and Kensi and Deeks, we're going to have an ending that keeps people excited and fulfilled. **P**

Love great interviews? Go to Parade.com/walterscott for more.

The Parade Don't Miss List

Here's what's on our radar for the week ahead. Go to Parade.com/entertainment for more.

JASON BATEMAN HITS THE ROAD

(MAY 23 ON MAX)

It's a road trip for Jason Bateman when he joins Will Arnett and Sean Hayes on the North American tour for their podcast in *SmartLess: On the Road* (May 23 on Max). The six-part docuseries provides intimate access into the minds, conversations and bonds behind one of the country's most popular podcasts as the trio crisscrosses the country and is joined by celebrity guests, including Conan O'Brien, Will Ferrell, Matt Damon, Jimmy Kimmel, Kevin Hart and David Letterman. The actor, 54, who won an Emmy for directing *Ozark*, got an early start in showbiz. Check out these fun facts below:



◀ Bateman first appeared in a cereal commercial for Golden Grahams at 11.



That's him playing James Cooper Ingalls in *Little House on the Prairie* (1981-1982).

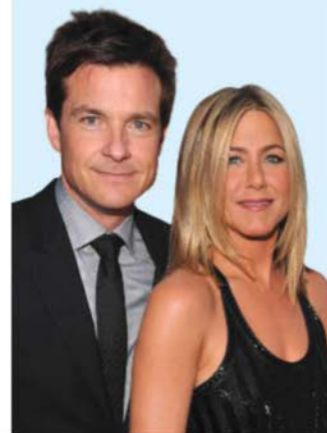


▲ He never received a high school diploma. He skipped his finals to be in *Teen Wolf Too*.

In all four of *Ozark*'s seasons, Bateman exclusively wears one pair of sneakers, the New Balance M1400DM.



Bateman has appeared with good friend Jennifer Aniston in five movies: *The Break-Up*, *The Switch*, *Horrible Bosses*, *Horrible Bosses 2* and *Office Christmas Party*.



PLATONIC

(MAY 24 ON APPLE TV+)

The 10-episode comedy is the story of Will (Seth Rogen) and Sylvia (Rose Byrne), who forged a bond while in college 20 years ago, which was broken when Sylvia told Will she didn't approve of the woman he was about to marry. Flash forward to present day when Will and Sylvia reconnect. His personal life is a mess after a divorce; Sylvia is figuring out how to reenter the work force after giving up her law career to raise her children. They are both floundering and find their way back to each other.

"The series reminds me of the type of movies that we used to make and that we aren't allowed to make anymore, like *Superbad*, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, *Knocked Up*, and the movies [showrunner] Nick [Stoller] was making, like *Forgetting Sarah Marshall* and *Neighbors*, which were all very human stories," says Rogen, 41. "They were about couples trying to date, couples breaking up, friends going their separate ways. They didn't have insane concepts and were grounded and based in very normal everyday things, but through that we were able to reach comedic heights."

Sylvia and Will realize how much they've missed their friendship in which they can truly be themselves—even if reestablishing it might involve accidental drug-fueled benders, breaking and entering to reclaim a pet lizard and a poorly executed art forgery. Luckily, the relationship that Byrne and Rogen had coming into the film from their previous experience acting together made it work. "When we made *Neighbors*, Rose and I were just getting to know one another and there was some crazy stuff we did in that movie," Rogen says. "Early on in filming, I could see in her face the look of, *Is this okay? Should we be doing this?*"



AMERICAN BORN CHINESE

(MAY 24 ON DISNEY)

Stephanie Hsu reunites with her *Everything Everywhere All at Once* costars Michelle Yeoh and Ke Huy Quan in *American Born Chinese* when she guest stars as Shiji Niangniang, the Goddess of Stones, who works in a modern-day jewelry shop along with her magical dog. Based on the genre-hopping graphic novel by Gene Luen Yang, the story focuses on Jin Wang, an average teenager juggling his high school social life with his home life. When he meets a new student on the first day of the school year, even more worlds collide as Jin is unwittingly entangled in a battle of Chinese mythological gods.

"It'll be sweet," Oscar-nominated Hsu says. "I pop in and out... but people are so excited that we're all together. I am a 'fly-by,' but [exec producer/director] Destin Daniel Cretton is amazing. He's definitely [cut] from the same cloth of heart space and scrappiness. The show is going to be really special."



YOU HURT MY FEELINGS

(MAY 26 IN THEATERS)

Julia Louis-Dreyfus returns to the big screen with *You Hurt My Feelings*, a comedic look at the complicated, awkward, funny dilemmas of adult relationships in today's world. This time, the Emmy Award-winning actress, 62, plays Beth, a novelist whose longtime marriage runs into some bumps when she overhears her husband (Tobias Menzies) give his honest reaction to her latest book. It rattles her self-confidence, but even worse, Beth can't believe Don would lie to her. Even more baffling, she doesn't understand how he doesn't adore what she has created.

"I've been married for 870 years," says Louis-Dreyfus, 62. "I got married young and I've stayed married to the same really good man, so I identify with the comfort of Beth and Don's relationship. I think they're mostly very happy together. But that comfort only makes Don's breach of trust more gutting for Beth." She goes on, "This is one of those stories where it's quite interesting to apply the question, *What would I do if somebody I love with all my heart and soul not only dislikes what I've created, but doesn't tell the truth about it?*"

The role made Louis-Dreyfus consider how Beth's identity was linked to her sense of accomplishment. "It's a particularly American idea that success and winning are what define you as a person—and I like the way the film digs into that so truthfully," she says. "Who is Beth if her work isn't successful or loved by all? Why does she need that?"

Parade Quiz

Fans of *The Little Mermaid*: Go to Parade.com/little-mermaid to find out more about the new movie.

CAN YOU NAME IT?

If you can't wait for the new live-action adaptation of Disney's *The Little Mermaid* (May 26 in theaters), you're not alone. While you're treading water reading about the new Ariel (Halle Bailey) and Ursula (Melissa McCarthy), test your knowledge of the 1989 movie with our quiz.

Answers on page 19.



1. What does Ariel call a fork?
- A. A doodad
 - B. A doohickey
 - C. A dinglehopper

2. Edie McClurg, who voiced Prince Eric's maid Carlotta, had a role in what other fan-favorite movie?
- A. *A Bug's Life*
 - B. *Cars*
 - C. *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*



3. Who got the idea for the bronze little mermaid statue in Copenhagen?
- A. The head of Carlsberg beer
 - B. The Lord Mayor of Copenhagen
 - C. Walt Disney

4. Can you name this man who wrote the original *The Little Mermaid* fairy tale?
- A. Edgar Allen Poe
 - B. Hans Christian Andersen
 - C. Wilhem Grimm



5. What role was offered to Patrick Stewart?
- A. King Triton
 - B. Scuttle
 - C. Flounder

6. How did the drag queen Divine influence *The Little Mermaid*?
- A. Ursula's hair
 - B. Ursula's makeup
 - C. Ursula's dramatic voice and movements



7. What does Sebastian say "is always greener, in somebody's else's lake" in the song "Under the Sea"?
- A. The grass
 - B. The seaweed
 - C. Money



8. Who is this actress who had roles on *Laverne & Shirley*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *ER*, and voiced Ursula in the *The Little Mermaid* in 1989?
- A. Pat Carroll
 - B. Ruth Buzzi
 - C. Carol Kane



9. What does actor Don Knotts of *The Andy Griffith Show* fame have to do with *The Little Mermaid*?
- A. He voiced Sebastian the Crab
 - B. He voiced Flotsam and Jetsam
 - C. His character from *The Incredible Mr. Limpet* appeared in the movie

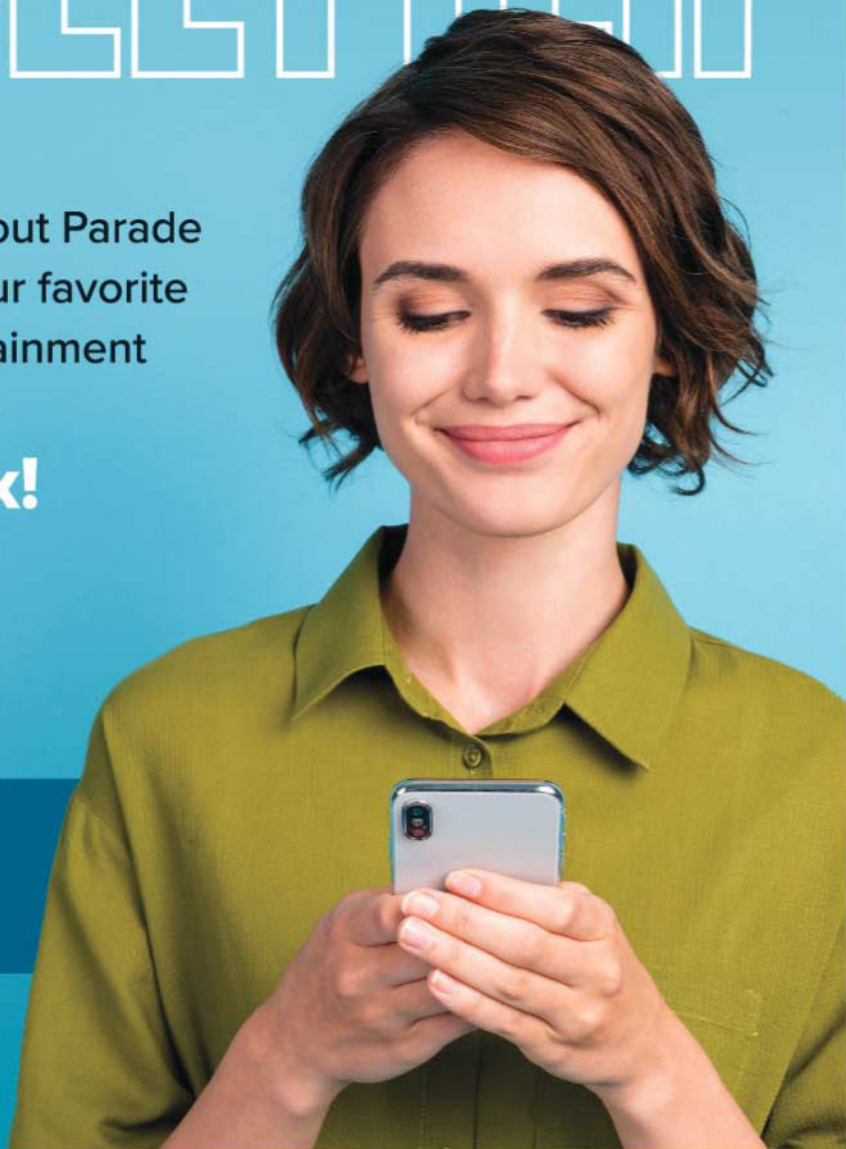


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Books

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12 NEW BOOKS TO KEEP YOU UP ALL NIGHT

Kick off summer with these page-turners. BY ELIZABETH HELD

WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN NOW? by Alafair Burke and Mary Higgins Clark

In 1975, Mary Higgins Clark captivated readers with her bestseller, *Where are the Children?*—a gripping tale about a mother wrongfully accused of harming her children, Mike and Melissa. Forty years later, the sequel, *Where are the Children Now?* (Simon & Schuster), follows the now-grown siblings attempting to find Melissa's missing stepdaughter. To survive, they'll need to draw on the experience of their own abduction and finally acknowledge the trauma they survived. A powerful and worthy successor to the original. **\$20, amazon.com**



THE NIGHT FLOWERS by Sara Herchenroether

Seeking a distraction from her breast cancer treatments, librarian Laura MacDonald teams up with Jean Martinez, a veteran detective, to solve a cold case in *The Night Flowers* (Tin House). Thirty years earlier, in 1983, the bodies of a woman and two children were found in New Mexico's Gila National Forest. Drawing on a thin case file, the unlikely pair set out to get justice for the victims in a pulse-pounding and poignant book. **\$24, amazon.com**

MOOREWOOD FAMILY RULES by HelenKay Dimon

Jillian Moorewood has always been the responsible one in her family of con artists—even going to prison to protect them. After more than three years away, she's returned to the family with an ultimatum: The scamming Moorewoods can either go straight or be cut off from the family coffers. Her relatives respond with a series of escalating attacks that Jillian and her new, hunky bodyguard work together to outsmart. *Oceans 8* fans will love the fun and fast pace of *Moorewood Family Rules* (Avon). **\$17, amazon.com**



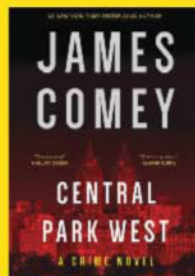
THE SENATOR'S WIFE by Liv Constantine



Anyone who still misses watching *Scandal* will appreciate Constantine's *The Senator's Wife* (May 23, Bantam), a delicious concoction of political intrigue, medical mystery and psychological suspense. The titular senator's wife, D.C. philanthropist Sloane Chase, becomes convinced that the in-home nurse her husband hired to assist after hip surgery is trying to steal her life. Be prepared: You'll be tempted to

finish this one in a single sitting. **\$26, amazon.com**

CENTRAL PARK WEST by James Comey



Former FBI director Comey draws on his experience prosecuting mobsters in this fiction debut (May 30, Mysterious Press). U.S. attorney Nora Carleton is on the cusp of finally sending a notorious mobster to jail when her star witness claims the crime family was responsible for the recent murder of a disgraced former governor, Tony Burke. The accusation sparks a battle

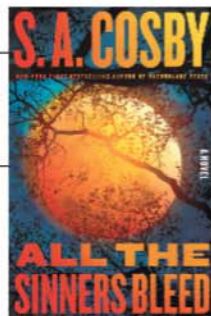
between the Department of Justice, the FBI, the Manhattan District Attorney and the NYPD. Equal parts political thriller, legal suspense and police procedural, *Central Park West* will keep readers turning pages late into the night. **\$26, amazon.com**



A DISAPPEARANCE IN FIJI

by Nilima Rao

It's 1914, and Indian police sergeant Akal Singh has been sent to Fiji after making an embarrassing professional mistake. When an indentured Indian woman disappears from a plantation, Akal recognizes it as a chance to redeem his reputation, but his superiors urge him to conduct a cursory investigation. Combining a tightly plotted mystery with a thoughtful critique of colonialism, *A Disappearance in Fiji* (June 6, Soho) establishes debut author Rao as a writer to watch. **\$26, amazon.com**



ALL THE SINNERS BLEED

by S. A. Cosby

Cosby reminds us all he's the reigning king of Southern noir with this latest thriller (June 6, Flatiron). A year after former FBI agent Titus Crown became the first Black sheriff in the history of his hometown, a young Black man is fatally shot by one of his deputies. Titus vows to complete a thorough investigation and uncovers a serial killer lurking in the community, launching a gripping cat-and-mouse game between the sheriff and a murderer. **\$24, amazon.com**



HOT POT MURDER

by Jennifer J. Chow

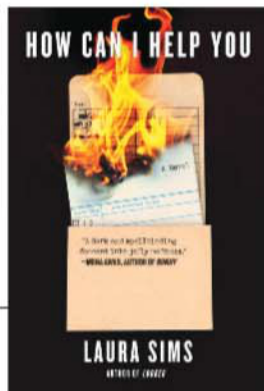
The second installment of Chow's cozy mystery series set at a California market, *Hot Pot Murder* (June 6, Berkley) is as charming and delightful as the first. The food stall cousins Yale and Celine Yee run is so successful they've been invited to attend an exclusive dinner with the local restaurant owners' association. Unfortunately, their celebration is cut short by the murder of the group's president. When suspicion falls on the cousins' good friend, they set out to find the real murderer. Spending time with these characters is a treat, but—full warning—this book will make you hungry. **\$9, amazon.com**



SPEAK OF THE DEVIL

by Rose Wilding

On New Year's Eve 1999, seven women are gathered in a hotel room—with the severed head of a man they all had good reason to kill. Each woman denies she committed the murder, but they all agree to work together to uncover the truth. *Speak of the Devil* (June 13, Minotaur) is told from alternating perspectives, giving each suspect a chance to reveal her secrets and possible motive. With seven unreliable narrators, the twists in this one will keep readers guessing right up until the end. **\$28, amazon.com**



HOW CAN I HELP YOU

by Laura Sims

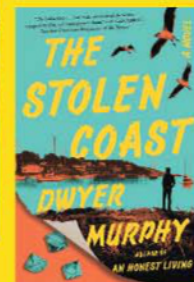
A book-lover's dream, *How Can I Help You* (July 18, Putnam), is a high-stakes thriller set in a library. None of Margo's colleagues or patrons at the library know her real name or that she spent years as a nurse who killed her patients. But Patricia, her new co-worker, senses Margo is hiding something. After a patron is found dead in the library's bathroom, Patricia becomes obsessed with finding—and exposing—her colleague's secret, a fixation that culminates in a shocking climax. **\$27, amazon.com**

Love Mysteries? Go to
Parade.com/best-mystery
for 101 whodunits.

YOU CAN TRUST ME

by Liv Wendy Heard

Heard's *You Can Trust Me* (June 13, Bantam) follows two best friends—and con women. For five years, Summer and Leo scammed Californians up and down the coast. When Leo meets billionaire Michael Forrester, the pair thinks their future is set, until she goes missing on his private island. Summer quickly cons one of Michael's friends and earns a coveted invite to the isle. Once she's there—and learns there's no way to leave—she uncovers a series of deadly secrets. It's a propulsive cross between *The Talented Mr. Ripley* and *And Then There Were None*, with a feminist twist. **\$28, amazon.com**



THE STOLEN COAST

by Dwyer Murphy

Jack Betancourt runs the family business, helping people with powerful enemies disappear. The arrival of his ex-girlfriend, Elena, in his sleepy Massachusetts beach town upsets his routine. A longtime swindler, Elena explains her plans to steal millions in diamonds from a colleague's safe. Jack becomes entangled in his ex's plan, and the pair launch a complex plot. Atmospheric and transportive, fans of classic hard-boiled noir will want to put *The Stolen Coast* (July 18, Viking) on the top of their to-be-read list. **\$27, amazon.com**



MARK HAMILL IS UP FOR ANYTHING

The man who's been kidnapped in his new film, *The Machine*, starred on Broadway, channeled a vampire, voiced the Joker and—oh yeah—played that Skywalker guy, is joyfully open to whatever comes next.

BY MARA REINSTEIN

Before Mark Hamill even starts to promote his new movie—let alone talk about you-know-what—he must address some important business. Well, not really *business*. More like a series of fun facts.

First he introduces his wife, Marilou, and shares that the secret to their 45-year marriage is compromise. The Hamills, who have three kids, would like to add that they each grew up reading *Parade* in the Sunday newspaper. Next, he dotes on the dogs: Trixie is an attention-loving rescue mix; Millie, he explains, has her own Instagram account with more than 27,000 followers. And did you know that the Oakland, California, native and L.A. resident used to live near Central Park in New York City for 20-some years in the '80s and '90s?

"I did a half-dozen Broadway shows," he says. "That was a revelation to me. We came back to California and people thought I had retired!"

If it's not obvious from that windup, Hamill, 71, is a talker and a doer—so giving up his storied acting career was not and is not an option. In fact, he's still capable of surprising his fans with a raucous comedic performance.

In *The Machine* (in theaters May 26), he portrays the estranged dad of a popular stand-up comic (Bert Kreischer, playing a loose version of himself). Nicknamed "The Machine" for his drinking prowess, Bert is best known for spinning an onstage anecdote about his time as a college foreign exchange student in Russia when he messed with the mob on a train. But the bad guys seek revenge in the present day, and bickering father and son are forced to go overseas to right the wrongs. That's when the real chaos—Drugs! Drinking! Bullet sprays! More drugs!—begins. "It turns into this surreal Russian spy fever dream and the events pile up, and it gets crazier and crazier until it explodes," Hamill says. (Kreischer's Russian '80s-set backstory, which is reenacted onscreen, is based on fact and has amassed more than 80 million YouTube views; everything else is fictional.)

continued on page 12

from page 11

"I had never read anything like that script and that's very rare for me," Hamill says. "It's like every movie can be compared to something else. But this story was so original and bonkers. I mean, I love that Bert tells this story in this routine and has his audiences in the palm of his hand—and that's just the starting point!"

The Machine marks Hamill's first live-action film since he reprised his most iconic character, Jedi hero Luke Skywalker, in *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* in 2019. (He's also since popped up as a younger version of Luke in the Disney+ TV series *The Mandalorian*.) And while he's happy to oblige a few *Star Wars*-related questions—he does a killer vocal impression of the famous Death Star conference room scene from the original 1977 movie—the actor would prefer to talk about the big picture as opposed to, well, one of the biggest pictures ever. As Hamill puts it, "People say to me, 'Do you worry that you'll only be remembered for one part?' Well, first of all, I never expected to be remembered for anything."

On a Thursday afternoon in early April, the actor detailed his long and unexpected journey for *Parade*.

How'd you like playing a wild and combative father?

Well, at the heart of the movie, this is a relationship film between a father and son. I don't understand Bert's character and disapprove of his lifestyle. And yet I love that the characters come together and the comedy comes into place. I knew it was a high-risk concept and if it misfired, it could have been a disaster. But there's a big, outrageous payoff. You know, this movie really is escapism. That's what we all need right now.

Your costar, Bert, has quite a viral following. Did you develop a familial bond with him? I had never heard of him, so I asked my kids. And they were like, "Oh my God! We hear him all the time!" Now I've gotten to know him and have developed a real fondness for him. Bert's got an authentic, larger-than-life personality and what you see is what you get. But at the first Zoom meeting, I couldn't understand why he would perform with his shirt off. I said things like, "Well, Jack Benny never took his shirt off and he was funny. Buddy Hackett never took his shirt off and he was funny." So, in a way, I was already playing into my character from the beginning.

How was your relationship with your own dad? Was he at all like the one in *The Machine*? Yeah, my dad [William, a U.S. Navy captain], was like him to a certain extent. I mean, he never really approved because I loved puppets and magic and comic books—all the things that he didn't understand. At the dinner table, I'd say, "Hey, listen, everybody, I have a really good Elmer Fudd impression" and do it. My father would say, "That's all well and good, Mark, but being able to impersonate Elmer Fudd is not going to get you anywhere in life." I think he wanted me to follow in his footsteps.



Hamill's brothers and sisters joined him in 2018 when he was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. (Carrie Fisher finally got her star in May 2023 and Hamill was there to celebrate her.)

What about the rest of your family? You come from a big one. My mom [Virginia] was very supportive. I have four sisters and two brothers and they were always a captive audience for my magic shows. I was the only one who went into show business. One of my brothers is a brilliant computer expert. Another brother always had a propensity for medicine. But you've got to follow your dreams.

So, which piece of entertainment inspired you to follow your Hollywood dreams?

The original *King Kong* [from 1933] changed my life. I remember watching the black-and-white version on TV when I was seven years old and it just wrecked me emotionally. I became so obsessed with it that I started going to the library and seeking out every piece of information on it that I could. I made my mom and my friends watch it. I can say it really led me to wanting to be a part of this business.

It's hard to believe that *Star Wars* was your first movie.

[They only gave me] a seven-page scene because they didn't trust us with the whole script. I will never forget sitting down and reading this thing called *The Adventures of Luke Starkiller as Taken from the "Journal of the Whills," Saga I: The Star Wars*. I had tested with Harrison [Ford] and he was a leading man and I started thinking, *Wait a minute. Harrison must be Luke and I'm his sidekick*. But then I realized, *Oh my god, this is seen through Luke's eyes. The teenage orphan!* What struck me was that the script was closer to *The Wizard of Oz* than *Forbidden Planet* or *Star Trek*. And I was just taken with the humor of it all, too, and the outrageous situations. Like, how are they going to do this?

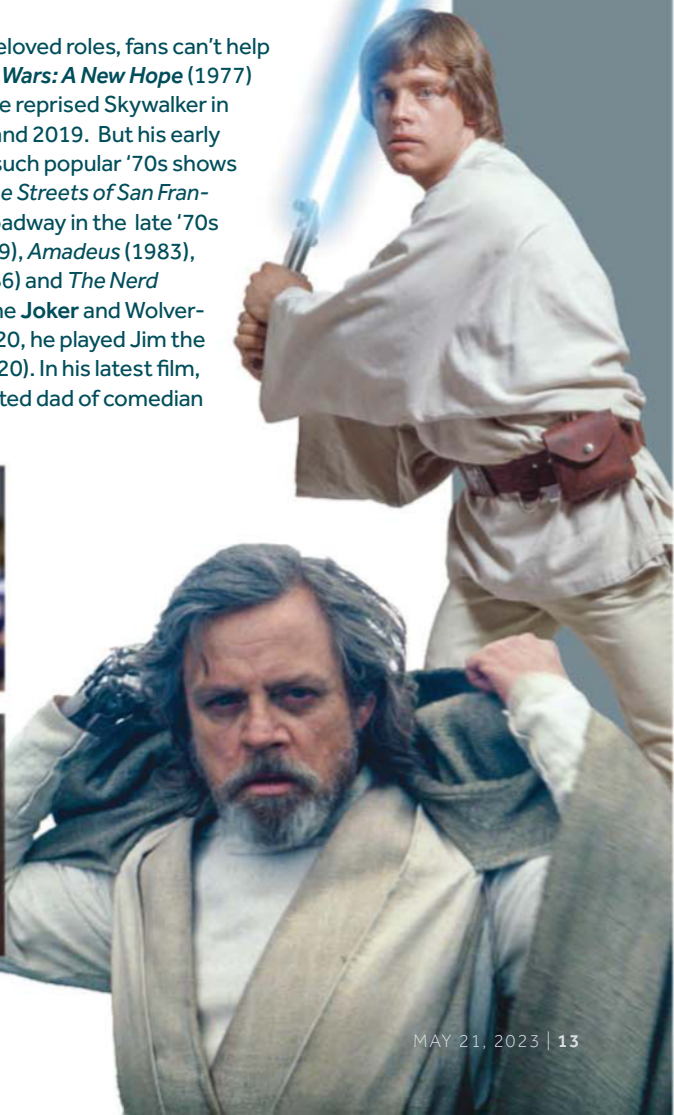
Did your dad live to see your success? He did. In fact, what was funny was that *Star Wars*

continued on page 14



ROLE PLAY

If we're talking about Mark Hamill's most beloved roles, fans can't help but mention Luke Skywalker. After all, *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) was his first film role when he was 24 and he reprised Skywalker in the *Star Wars* sequel trilogy in 2015, 2017 and 2019. But his early years in the business were spent on TV in such popular '70s shows as *Room 222*, *Petrocelli*, *Eight Is Enough*, *The Streets of San Francisco* and *One Day at a Time*. He was on Broadway in the late '70s and '80s, starring in *The Elephant Man* (1979), *Amadeus* (1983), *Harrigan 'N Hart* (1985), *Room Service* (1986) and *The Nerd* (1987-77). He has voiced everyone from the *Joker* and Wolverine to Stickybeard and Buzz Buzzard. In 2020, he played Jim the Vampire in *What We Do in the Shadows* (2020). In his latest film, *The Machine* (2023), he's Albert, the abducted dad of comedian Bert Kreischer.



Want More *Star Wars*? Go to
Parade.com/mark-hamill
for his take on the epic's legacy.

from page 13

came out and became this huge hit. But the thing that really impressed my dad wasn't *Star Wars*—it was when I was on a Bob Hope special. That spoke to him because, like, *Oh my god, Bob Hope wants my son on his show!*

Why go from sci-fi epics to theater? I love character parts and inhabiting a completely different personality. One of my favorite productions was a revival of *Room Service* directed by Alan Arkin. I got some of the best reviews of my career because the critics assumed I'd be the wide-eyed, innocent guy who'd never be in the big city. Instead, I was playing the role that Groucho Marx had in the movie. I slicked back my hair and had a pencil mustache. I'd look in the mirror and go, *Mark Hamill is gone.*



Hamill, 26, Carrie Fisher, 21, and Harrison Ford, 35, chat during a *Star Wars* press tour stop in Denver in June, 1977.

Does that mentality also explain why you went into voiceover roles? I fell into voiceover, and it was a revelation. By definition, it's character acting because the definition of "character actor" is someone who disappears into the role. I mean, you're visually unimportant. So I got parts that I would never have gotten on camera.

Well, you did famously play the Joker in the animated *Batman* series for decades. I would never have played the Joker on camera! I have to say, it gives me great satisfaction that the roles I'm most known for are so diametrically opposed. Playing the Joker, who is just insane and immoral, was very liberating because I got to take so many chances. But it's funny because you can get typecast even in animation. I've been offered a rash of maniacal, villainous roles.

Given that you're so synonymous with these roles, do you think you've received the respect that you deserve as an actor? Well, you know, I don't

QUESTION MARKS

Favorite comedy movie? *Duck Soup* [from 1933]

Last TV binge? *Only Murders in the Building* and *Schitt's Creek*.

Recent read? *I Alone Can Fix It* by Carol D. Leonnig and Philip Rucker



Favorite music? The Beatles, The Kinks, The Rolling Stones and Crosby, Stills & Nash. I'm from the '60s generation, so I'm at the point where *Saturday Night Live* comes on and I don't know who the musical guest is.



Are you a good cook? I am! My mother showed me how to make lasagna and a lemon meringue pie and fried chicken. She taught me that onion rings need to be soaked in buttermilk for 24 hours. I love to cook because of her.

Ever been starstruck? I could not contain myself when I met **Martin Short**. Like, *OK, take a deep breath.* And when I ran into Catherine O'Hara at a voiceover session I just went on and on about her work. She was so sweet and gracious.



think of it in those terms. I was always grateful to get work, so that never really registered. I obviously see it from the inside out and I'm sometimes surprised when people put it in a different perspective because I did love being a part of the *Star Wars* films.

Now that so many cast members of the original trilogy have passed away, do you feel like you're the custodian of the franchise? The answer is no. I don't feel that way at all. No, no. I was given closure and it's a whole new era now. Luke was given such definite closure, so it was easy to let it go. I mean, [as a kid] I went to nine different schools in 12 years. I've always been good at letting things go. It's not easy, but you have to acknowledge reality.



Hamill at a 2017 London premiere of *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* with his daughter Chelsea, who is his personal assistant, and his wife Marilou York.

What would your fans be surprised to learn about you? I love comedy. I grew up watching The Marx Brothers and Laurel and Hardy. I adored *The Jack Benny Show* and his comic timing. When I read *Star Wars*, I thought the droids [C-3PO and R2-D2] were hilarious because they talked like Bud Abbott and Lou Costello. Many people have said to me over the years, "Gosh you're so funny," and what they're implying is that they're surprised I'm funny because I'm never funny in films or on television. [Marilou chimes in off-camera, "When I met him, I said, 'You should do stand-up comedy!'"]

How did you and Marilou meet? Let's hear a great romantic story. I went to get my teeth cleaned. She's a dental hygienist. There was a thunderbolt because I was very attracted to her and wanted to ask her out. We went to see *Annie Hall* and it was sort of a test because I wanted to know whether she had a sense of humor—I had dated women before who were lovely but just didn't share my sense of humor. So I was sort of monitoring her. And she passed with flying colors. And when I took her to a *Star Wars* screening, she leaned over during one scene and whispered, "Bad caps." She was watching it from a dental point of view! That made me laugh.

So, no hard feelings that *Annie Hall* beat *Star Wars* for the Best Picture Oscar? I was thrilled because I thought it was probably not a good thing if my first movie won. There was nowhere to go but down. But *Annie Hall* certainly deserved it.

Want to brag about your kids for a minute? Do they act? None of them are in the business, but they're artistic. My oldest son, Nathan, does a comic strip online called *2 Dumb Dinos*. He's in the process of turning it into an animated series. My middle son, Griffin, is a martial arts instructor and he's incredible at drawing people's likeness. And my youngest, Chelsea, has been my personal assistant for many years. She bosses me around and keeps me on the up-and-up. She got her master's degree at USC, so she's

really the academic success story.

What's your off-screen life like these days? You're very active on Twitter and what else? I'm reading a lot of books about what we've all been through politically over the past eight years. I can't tell you how many times I've watched the news and been like, "Oh I gotta go watch something on Turner Classic Movies." But you know, I'm a homebody. All my kids live nearby and visit me all the time. I love my family. I have my wife and my dogs and reading and drawing. I enjoy it all. **P**

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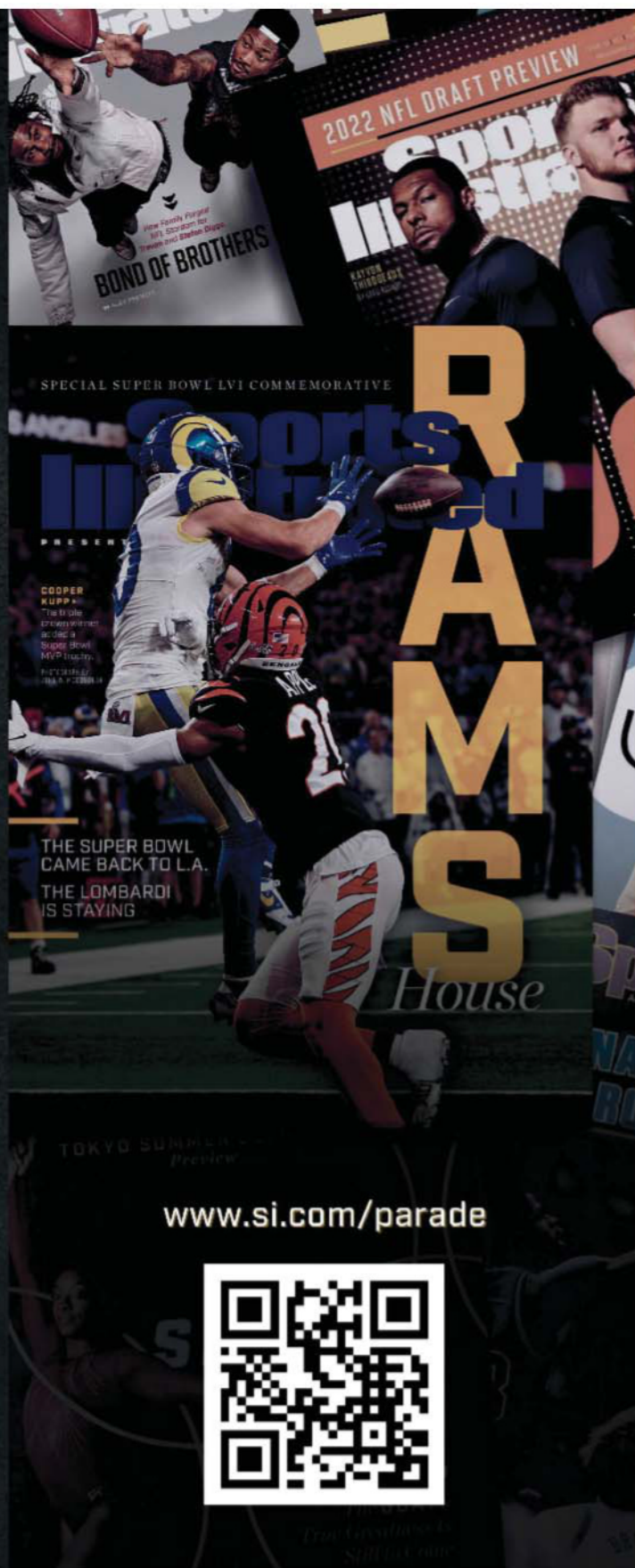


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35		5		3		1		17
37								19
41								23
79								55
77		73		65		61		59

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Why do songbirds have such powerful voices? I'm walking outdoors about a tenth of a mile from a northern cardinal singing, and his notes are loud and clear. If my husband were that far away, I don't think I could hear him, even if he were shouting.

—Cindy Gawlik, Shorewood, Illinois



A human voice arises from the larynx, at the top of what we call the windpipe. But a songbird's vocalizing comes from an organ called a syrinx, located at the bottom of its windpipe. In addition, the syrinx is surrounded by an air sac. This fortunate combination amplifies sound, giving us humans a glorious dawn chorus from our feathered friends, at its best from late April through early June. And while humans have a single set of vocal cords, songbirds have two sets. They can sing harmony with themselves!

Songbirds comprise almost half of the world's bird species, but you may be surprised to know that their songs must be learned by each bird. (The simpler sounds made by non-songbird species are instinctual. Those sounds are known as "calls.") Informal lessons begin in the nest, where the little ones listen to the adults. Later, the young fledglings attempt to replicate the songs, practicing until they've got it right. Or close enough: In some species, birds develop dialects when populations become separated from each other, much like human accents!

CLASSIC ASK MARILYN

THE WHICH DIRECTION QUESTION

AUGUST 7, 1994

You're driving on Route I-35 at mile marker 75. You see a sign that says exit 80 is 5 miles ahead. You get off at exit 80 and are now on Route I-70 at mile marker 235. The next marker is 234.

Without consulting a map, what direction were you going and what direction are you going now?

—Steven Campbell, So. Dennis, Mass.

THE OUTCAST ANIMAL PROBLEM

JULY 22, 2007

Which animal doesn't belong: bear, beaver, bull, clam, dog, eel, fox, mouse, mule, owl, ox, peacock, pigeon, skunk?

—Warren Walker, Reading, Mass.

Find solutions to Marilyn's puzzles and this week's Numbrix on the next page!

THE OUTCAST ANIMAL PROBLEM

The animal that doesn't belong is pigeon. It's the only animal on the list not found in a familiar simile, such as, "Busy as a beaver" or "Sly as a fox."



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35	34	5	4	3	2	1	16	17
36	33	6	7	10	11	14	15	18
37	32	31	8	9	12	13	20	19
38	39	30	29	28	27	26	21	22
41	40	45	46	47	48	25	24	23
42	43	44	69	68	49	52	53	54
79	80	81	70	67	50	51	56	55
78	75	74	71	66	63	62	57	58
77	76	73	72	65	64	61	60	59

THE WHICH DIRECTION QUESTION

Here is Marilyn's answer: Unless this area is an exception to the rule, you're heading generally north before you turned and now are heading generally west.

On interstate highways (the "I" in I-35 and I-70 stands for "interstate"), odd-numbered highways go north/south and even-numbered ones go east/west. So, you were traveling north or south on I-35 when you were at mile marker 75. Mile markers

and exit numbers (which usually are numbered the same as the mile markers at the location would be) begin at either the southernmost or westernmost part of each state. So, because you moved from mile marker 75 to exit 80, you were traveling north on I-35. Then you turned onto I-70, which runs east/west. Because you're moving from mile marker 235 to 234 (and east/west mile markers begin at the west), you're traveling west on I-70.

CAN YOU NAME IT? (FROM *THE LITTLE MERMAID* QUIZ, PAGE 6)

1. C. A "dinglehopper" is Ariel's word for a fork.

2. A., B. and C. Prolific actress Edie McClurg, who voiced Prince Eric's maid Carlotta, had a role in all three of those films. She was Minny in *Cars* (2006), Dr. Flora in *A Bug's Life* (1998) and the school secretary, Grace, in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (1986).

3. A. Carl Jacobsen, the son of Carlsberg beer's founder, commissioned the bronze mermaid statue in Copenhagen in 1909 after seeing a ballet of *The Little Mermaid*.

4. B. Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen wrote *The Little Mermaid* in 1837.

5. A. King Triton. Patrick Stewart had to turn down the chance to play the ruler of Atlantica because he was committed to *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Kenneth Mars voiced Triton.



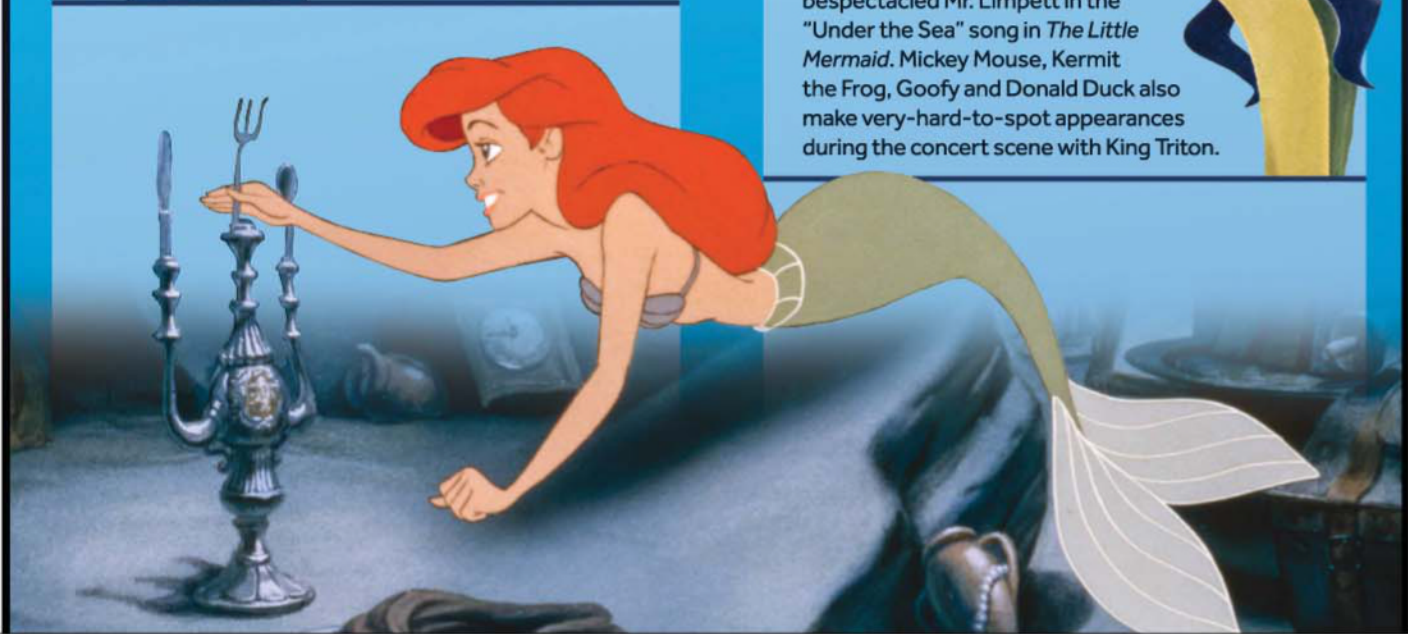
6. A., B. and C. You can thank Divine for inspiring Ursula's hair, makeup, voice and performance.

7. B. "The seaweed is always greener in somebody else's lake" is the crab Sebastian's take on the "grass is always greener" adage.

8. A. Pat Carroll voiced Ursula in *The Little Mermaid*. The actress, who died in 2022, had roles on *Laverne & Shirley*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *ER* and many other shows. She was also memorable as Prunella, one of the wicked stepsisters in the 1965 production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical version of *Cinderella*.



9. C. Don Knott's character from *The Incredible Mr. Limpet* appeared in a cameo in *The Little Mermaid*. In the 1964 comedy, Knott's played a man who wants to be a fish. He turns into a fish with a pair of eyeglasses. You can see the bespectacled Mr. Limpet in the "Under the Sea" song in *The Little Mermaid*. Mickey Mouse, Kermit the Frog, Goofy and Donald Duck also make very-hard-to-spot appearances during the concert scene with King Triton.



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